



*Healthy People Living in Healthy Communities*

# Local Solutions to Local Problems: South Carolina's Small Local Governments Compliance Assistance Project

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# Project Goals

- EPA's Goal: Develop capacity test and demonstrate its use pursuant to Small Local Governments Compliance Assistance Policy
- DHEC's Goal: Address chronic non-compliance of small municipal drinking water systems in the Low Country region of South Carolina

# Project Partners



- EPA
- ECOS
- DHEC (Aiken & Beaufort Regional EQC Offices)
- Low Country Council of Governments
- Force & Associates



# Project Activities

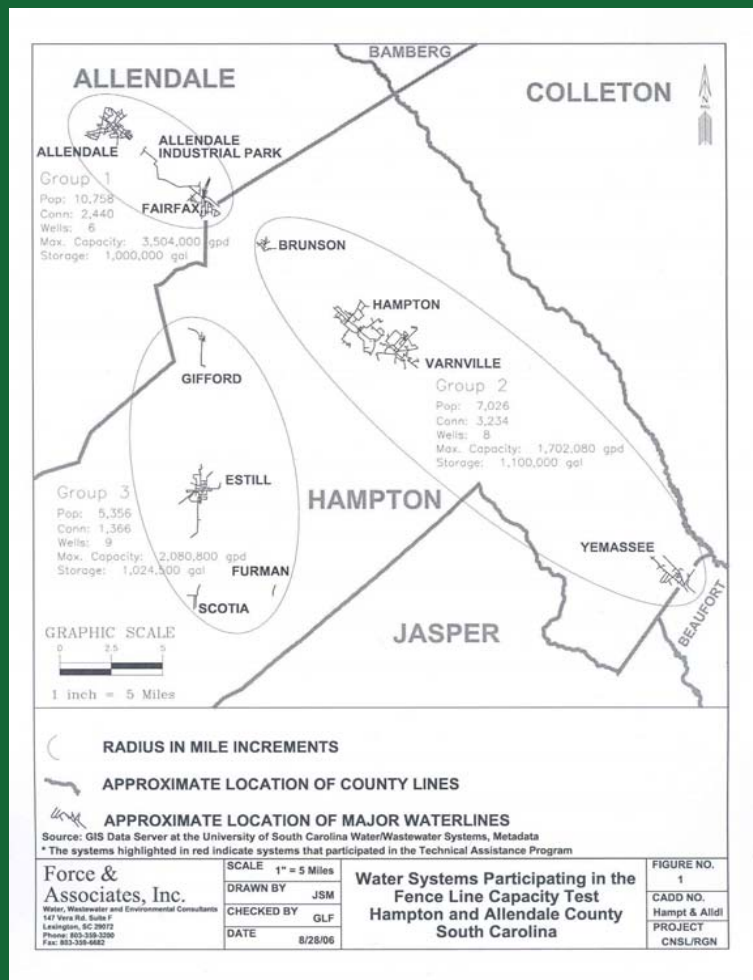


- Develop “fenceline” capacity test for small municipal drinking water systems pursuant to EPA policy
- Analyze technical, managerial and financial aspects of the eleven municipal water systems in the regions
- Apply the test to the municipal water systems and provide results to each system

## Project Activities cont.

- Determine whether the systems can remain viable
- Identify areas of concern from the test results, and facilitate dialogue among the systems
- Discuss consolidation and regionalization options with the systems

# Project Map





# Project Results

## General



- 8 out of 11 systems were not adequate
  - Within last 5 years 3 systems had Consent Agreements and 1 had a Notice of Violation
  - 9 systems received grants to fund water & sewer projects within past 10 years

# Project Results cont.

## Technical

- Most systems have adequate water capacity
- One system failed to meet minimum storage requirement
- Most systems either borderline or not adequate in compliance with programs, manuals, and procedures





# Project Results cont.

## Managerial



- 9 of the 11 systems were not adequate
- ½ systems lack professional managers
- More than ½ lack up-to-date fixed asset registers

# Project Results cont.

## Financial



- None are adequate
- Most systems have water budgets combined with other services
- Most systems have excessive water loss, substantial debt per customer, low rates, and inadequate depreciation funding

# Project Results Summary



- One system has adequate technical, managerial, financial capacity to remain compliant
- Estimated 30% savings by regionalization or consolidation of services
- About 15% reduction in staff by regionalization or consolidation

# Project Status

- DHEC supplemented the grant to ensure end goals were achieved. This included work with municipal leaders to:
  - Facilitate further discussions of regionalization and consolidation issues for small water systems
  - Determine how to combine strengths and eliminate weaknesses of technical, managerial and financial issues for systems to increase overall environmental compliance

# Conclusion

Project Summary and Capacity test are available on the DHEC web site at

[www.dhec.sc.gov/compass](http://www.dhec.sc.gov/compass)

“Recently Completed and Ongoing Projects”

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